671
593 In propagandizing and implementing the
582 Marriage Law, the regime struck hard against the old authoritarianism of the family head, child marriages, mistreatment of women and discrimination against them as inferior to men, and the mistreatment of children by parents. Wives, especially wives of arranged marriages, were encouraged to seek divorce from intolerant unrepentent husbands. However, if husbands could be made to adopt the new attitude toward women, partners of arranged marriages were urged to remain united.

To help traditionally minded families attain the new Communist-established goal of "democracy" and "harmony," family "struggle" meetings were arranged under cadre supervision. Each member was pressed to confess his own past sins and suffering and to help other family members to remember theirs. The particular transgressions sought out for exposure, condemnation, redress, and rectification were the mistreatment and beating of wives by husbands, similar behavior by mothers-in-law against daughters-in-law, and interference by parents in young people's free choice of marriage partners. Much was made in the Communist press of the suicides or murder of women and young people, attributed to "the old feudal system of marriage."[12]

12. See especially C.B., 273, pp. 1-3; 236, pp. 4-14; and Survey of the China Mainland Press, Hong Kong, American Consulate General, 932, p. iv; hereafter cited as SCMP. The same conditions apply to this source as to C.B.

671 593 642 582 Whatever the humanitarian by-products, the Marriage Law aimed at a basic change in Chinese society with two utilitarian purposes in view. One was to change the popular basis of loyalty from the family to the state. The other was to free the Chinese woman from her preoccupation with the home and children so that she might become a laborer in the field and factory. These aims were quite openly expressed.

For instance, an article in the Peking Chung-kuo Ch'ing-nien Pao [China Youth] on the correct attitude toward parents, asserts that under the Confucian system with its emphasis on filial piety, parents had the right to regard their children as private property and demand sacrifices of them. Under the new system, the article points out, "children are not the private property of their parents, but belong first of all to the state and to the people, and ...the interests of the people should be the highest criterion governing our actions toward our parents."[13]

An editorial in the People's Daily in March 1955 notes that remnant feudal ideologies still obstructed "the participation of woman in socialist construction and various political activities." The editorial then goes on the state that it is in order to promote the political and production zeal of women that their rights must be promoted

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13. SCMP, 973, p. 31.

671 and the Marriage Law implemented.[14] Various
642 comments on the Marriage Law inspired by the
593 regime stress Lenin's dictum that sex relation-
582 ships and family problems are not individual or small affairs but matters of great social, economic, and political significance.[15]

B. Implementation of the Marriage Law

671 As the Nationalist Government had made
582 no attempt to put into effect the marriage and
593 family provisions of its 1930-31 codes among the
369 rural population, the spirit and provisions of the Marriage Law were new and alien to this great majority of the Chinese people. They were still bound to the traditional family and had not encountered the economic experience and education which had pushed the family in Western-influenced cities toward new types of social organization from the beginning of the 20th century. Moreover, the new law offered no immediate or apparent economic benefits as had the Land Reform Law.

671 The result was apathy, when not open re-
645 sistance, toward the reorientation of marriage
593 and family practices among the farming popu-
582 lation. These attitudes were as typical of most of the village cadres as of the rural people

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14. Ibid., 106, p. 15.

15. See, for instance, C.B., 275, p. 4; and SCMP, 1048, pp. 30-31.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF12 North China AF12

generally.[16] However, Liu Ching-fan's criticism in 1953 of the use of force by village cadres to achieve acceptance of the new Marriage Law's provisions indicates that up to that time violence accompanied this measure as it had other measures in Communist China.[17]

The regime became aware only slowly of the failure of the Marriage Law to take automatic effect. A preliminary investigation gave such cause for concern that a thorough investigation was made at the end of 1952.[18] The results impelled the Communists to launch a drive for the thorough implementation of the Marriage Law and intensive indoctrination of the people in its principles. The movement was restricted to Han Chinese areas where land reform had been completed.[19]

Summing up the result of the campaign before the Government Administration Council on November 11, 1953, Liu Ching-fan reported satisfactory indoctrination of 80 to 90 per cent of the adults in 15 per cent of the nation's hsien and municipalities where land reform had been completed and, to a somewhat lesser degree, 60 to 70 per cent of the people in 60 per cent of similar local areas. Almost no progress was indicated in the remaining 25 per cent of the localities.[20]

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16. See editorial comment, C.B., 136, pp. 3-4
17. C.B., 273, p. 4.
18. C.B., 136, pp. 3-4.
19. C.B., 273, p. 1.
20. Ibid., p. 3.

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671 Assuming the population in these areas to be rough-
593 ly equal, these figures would mean that on an
582 over-all basis even partial success was claimed for only 48 to 55.5 per cent of the population subjected to the indoctrination process.

C. The Communists' Vague Picture of Success

Unfortunately, we cannot precisely judge how successful the regime has been in implementing the Marriage Law nationally or regionally. Communist evaluations are too generalized to reveal a definite picture, and statistics released by the regime are sketchy and, when available, rarely provide a basis for significant comparison. For instance, in the spring of 1955 the Ministry of Internal Affairs reported on the prevalence of free marriages during the first quarter of 1954, stating that of the 402,025 applications for marriage registration in 562 hsien and municipalities of 15 provinces, only 1.07 per cent were denied because the contemplated marriages had been arranged without the willing consent of the couples concerned.[21] No figures were given on the remaining, roughly three-quarters of the country's hsien and municipalities, nor was any indication given to show whether the figures cited were typical of the whole country, the only figures available, or figures selected for propaganda or other purposes. A separate press report on the situation in Peking during 1954 noted

21. SCMP,,1002, p. 3.

671 582 583 that only 13 of 30,389 couples applying for marriage registration failed to satisfy the requirements of the Marriage Law.[22] If the figures can be given credence, they indicate a remarkable advance over the situation existing two years earlier. After an investigation of Marriage Law implementation in 1952, a woman minister of justice, Shih Liang, reported that in only three of the country's 2,086 hsien were families reformed up to perfect Communist standards, and that in the East and Central-South regions freely contracted marriages and other reforms had gained no acceptance with the people.[23]

Reports on the results of the 1952 investigations of Marriage Law implementation were evidently intended to illustrate the extent or lack of family reform rather than to give a comprehensive picture of it. One report noted that in ten villages of Ts'ang hsien, Hopei, two-thirds of the sixty marriages contracted from January to September 1951 had been arranged by parents.[24] Another press account referred to conditions in Ho-chi[illegible]hsien in southwestern Shansi where the groom customarily paid a bride-price of one shih-tan (110 lbs) of wheat for every year of the bride's age up to 18.[25] Another news story, citing better conditions in the "old liberated areas,"

22. Ibid., 1007, p. 30.
23. China News Analysis, Hong Kong, No. 5, p. 3.
24. C.B., 236, p. 5.
25. Ibid., p. 14.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF12 North China AF12

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mentioned eight ch'ü in as many hsien of Shansi Province where approximately 88 per cent of the 2,047 marriages during 1951 were contracted of free choice.[26] By contrast, another news item reported that in northern Kiangsu during the first half of 1952 the number of arranged engagements totaled 39,911 or nearly three times the number of engagements "founded on free love," while 19,894 arranged marriages had taken place, exceeding the number of free marriages by 28 per cent.[27]

A further study of figures issued by Communist sources indicates that the regime did not have exact knowledge of the situation in many areas. To cite one example, an announcement of the results of the 1952 investigation of Marriage Law implementation included "incomplete statistics" on deaths attributed to the existence of problems and mistreatment connected with the "feudal family" system.

According to these figures, 4,105 women were killed or driven to suicide in the East China Region between January and August 1952; and 356 women and 161 young men suffered the same fate in the Northwest Region during the first half of 1952. In lieu of figures for the Central-South Region, the report mentioned 606 young men and women met violent deaths as a result of marriage

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26. Ibid., p. 4.
27. Ibid., p. 14.

671 disputes in 39 hsien (out of a total of 86) in Hunan.
593 No statistics were given for the North China
582 Region.[28]

It seems reasonable to assume that the figures are incomplete and the categories not comparable because the Communists had no more accurate material to offer. If the incidence of violence in connection with marital and family disputes is truly reflected in these figures, their extension into yearly rates shows these deaths occurred at the rate of less than two per hundred-thousand population in the Northwest Region, less than four per hundred-thousand in the East China Region, and less than nine per hundred-thousand in Hunan. It should be remembered, however, that these ratios are based on incomplete figures and that the incidence of violence may have resulted as much from Communist pressures as from the authoritarian character of the traditional family.

671 Divorce figures released by the Communists
586 are equally difficult to render meaningful because of gaps in statistics and the different time spans and categories which are given for the figures cited. For the nation as a whole, the number of divorces was reported to have risen from 186,000 in 1950 (the last seven months of it under the New Marriage Law), to 409,500 in 1951, and to 398,000 in the first half of 1952.[29] The latter

28. C.B., 236, p. 5.
29. Ibid., 243, p. 3.

figure is only slightly higher than the number of divorces for all of 1952 in the United States, whose population is about one-quarter that of China.[30] So far as is known, no separate figure for the number of divorces in the North China Region has been made public.

The latest picture of the progress of family reform to be released by the Communist regime was contained in the March 1955 report of the Marriage Law Implementing Committee. Although most of the report was couched in generalities, it included a summary of conditions "in certain advanced areas in Shansi and elsewhere." According to the committee, family relationships were improved or improving in 90-95 per cent of the homes and was "bad" in only 5-10 per cent. Of the larger group, 10-15 per cent were described as the "advanced modern type...with a definite degree of socialist consciousness, where democracy and harmony obtain and members are united for production." The report added that in 80 per cent of these homes women were no longer "oppressed, beaten, or scolded," but "remnants of the patriarchal system and the conception of the rights of the husband" still existed to varying degrees.[31]

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30. Divorces in the United States during 1952 totaled 392,000. See The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1955, Harry Hansen, ed., New York, New York World Telegram and The Sun, 1955, p. 312.

31. SCMP., 1002, p. 3.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF12 North China AF12

D. Reorientation of Family Reform

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After March 1953, the Communist approach to marriage and family reform seems to have undergone a change. There are indications that the regime's emphasis on new freedom for women and the prominent publicity given statistics on divorce had led to the Marriage Law being popularly termed the "Divorce Law."[32] At the same time, resistance in the rural areas to sudden changes in the old institutions of marriage and family relations were becoming evident to Party leaders as the results of the late 1952 investigations were tabulated.

A shift in the pace and in the propaganda emphasis on marriage and family reform was evident in Liu Ching-fan's report to the Government Administration Council at the end of 1953. Although the better treatment and greater freedom given to woman was not to be neglected, greater emphasis was placed on the establishment of "harmonious" and "democratic" relationships within the family, whether originally of the old or new type, and to the positive benefits that would accrue to all members of the family as a consequence of reform.[33]

Analyzing the then current situation, Liu noted that the people still maintained a feudal ideology and consciousness in regard to many

32. China News Analysis, 5, p. 2.
33. C.B., 273, pp. 5-6.

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582 social problems, and that this attitude in respect to marriage problems was a "more universal and serious one." Liu admitted that the abolition of the feudal marriage system and the establishment of the new system was "a long term and difficult process in the ideological and social reform of the people." To accomplish this reform, he added, the regime would have to co-ordinate its efforts with the people's personal interests and levels of attainment, persuade the people patiently, and raise their level steadily. The process of implementing the Marriage Law, Liu concluded, would have to be made part of the regular tasks of the government and people's organizations at all levels and co-ordinated with the central tasks of production, construction, and elections.[34] These recommendations have become the principles by which the government still seems to be guided in marriage and family reform.

In the cities where modern influences had prepared the people for acceptance of new marriage and family principles, the regime encountered a different kind of problem. Just before International Women's Day, March 8, 1955, an authoritative statement in the Communist press added a new note to the usual references to lingering remnants of feudal obstruction and the long-term nature of family reform. The statement charged that bourgeois ideology had reached into marriage and family relationships.

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34. Ibid., pp. 4-6.

The bourgeois influences detected were love of luxury and disparagement of labor, "carelessness" in choosing marriage partners or the desire for new partners after marriage, and devotion to self-interest. They had respectively given rise to the sins of marriage based on money, "the belittlement of sexual relationships," and maltreatment, desertion, and irresponsibility toward parents and children.[35]

The nation's young people were evidently the most prone to this subversive influence. A campaign was launched in the large cities during the spring of 1955 to guard youth against "bourgeoise concepts." In connection with the drive, the Communist press evidenced concern regarding romantic love, heart-break, unsolved marriage problems of workers in sparsely populated areas, and the attractions and diversions of a carefree social life in the cities. These things, the press warned, were subverting many young people from their primary duty of devoting their whole effort and attention to study and work in the national interest. The advice of the Communist editors "to place love in a secondary position in one's life" is hardly likely to solve the problem.[36]

A different sort of problem confronted youth in the countryside. Apparently the possibility was not present there for youth to develop love

35. SCMP., 1022, p. 4.
36. Ibid., 1006, pp. 15-18; 1052, pp. 25-33.

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and marriage attachments through the ideal and officially sanctioned method of mutual participation in production, indoctrination, and study. A 1955 report on Marriage Law implementation admitted that "in the extensive rural districts... the conditions for adequate communal life and avenues for social intercourse" are lacking. As a result, "most marriages are still being contracted after both parties were first introduced to each other by third parties." The report hastened to explain that as the bride and groom gave their previous agreement to the marriage it was to be regarded as a marriage of free will and not to be confused with the old and outlawed practice of arranged marriage.[37]

E. Replacement of the Family's Social, Economic, and Political Role

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A second step taken by the Communist regime to change radically the nature and function of the Chinese family was accomplished with the establishment of organizations to regiment every phase of human endeavor. The labor unions in the city, the peasant associations, mutual aid teams, and co-operatives in the country became the center not only of economic life, but of social political, and indoctrination activities as well. Unions were organized in the cities almost as they fell to the Communist armies, but the formation of comparable institutions in the countryside awaited the gradual process of land reform.

37. Ibid., 1002, p. 3.

2: Gamble S-5 (1926-1933)1954 AF 12 North China AF 12

per cent had less than 10 members. The corresponding figures for the 5,255 families were 40.5 and 88.4 per cent.

Five hundred and seven individuals, 1.4 per cent of the members of the 5,255 families, were away from home when our study was made. Only seven of these were females. This number did not, of course, include any married daughters as they would be counted as members of their husband's family. Peking and Tientsin, with cheap railway transportation available, offered industrial and educational opportunities that attracted at least some of the residents of Ting Hsien.

Composition of the Family

From the family records it has been possible to study the relationship between the various members of the family. The relationship given here is that of the individual to the male head of the family, or to the deceased husband of the female head. There were 54 different kinds of relationship listed in the 5,255 families and 39 in the 515 families. They covered a range of seven generations, from grandfather to great-great-grandson. The Chinese list is lengthened by their concise differentiation of relationships: elder brother, younger brother, father's elder brother, father's younger brother. The same differentiation is applied to aunts, sisters-in-law, nieces, and nephews. The relationships in four groups of families are shown in Table 4.

While the "large family" system, with several generations and coordinate branches of the family living together and pooling their economic resources, has been the typical family system in China, our relationship figures seem to show that there was a tendency and possibly a growing tendency for the brothers to divide the family after their father's death. The Ting Hsien families were generally small. Only 8.7 per cent of the 5,255 families had more than 10 members. Not more than two generations were represented in 51.4 per cent of the 515 families.

The head of a Chinese family is usually the oldest male in the family group. However, it is possible for a father, who wants to retire, to pass the headship to one of his sons. Ordinarily it will go to his eldest son, but, in some instances, personal qualities and the choice of the family will give the leadership to a younger son. In the 5,255 families there were 84 and in the 515 families 23 men whose younger brothers were heads of families. In special family situations the headship may

2: Gamble S-5 (1926-1933) 1954 AF-12 North China AF-12

593 596 even pass to a brother rather than to a son on the death or retirement of the head of the family.

If a son is still young when he succeeds to the headship of the family someone of the older generation, often his mother or perhaps an uncle, who may have come to help the family, will act for him, but in his name, until he is older.

593 562 596 Some authorities say that a woman is never recognized as the head of a family, but in 211 cases, 4.0 per cent of the 5,255 families, a woman was listed as the head of the family. In the 515 families the proportion was smaller, only 1.2 per cent, but in six families in that group a woman was the recognized head.

593 596 If the different relatives are divided into four groups, parents, head of the family and his descendants, brothers and their dependents, and other relatives, we find that the family head, his immediate family, and direct descendants were some 82 per cent; brothers, both older and younger, their wives and descendants, some 12 per cent; the older generations, fathers, mothers, grandfathers, uncles, uncles' wives, some 5 per cent of the group. Other relatives were only some 0.2 per cent. The figures in Table 4, for three different groups of Ting Hsien families, are generally so similar that it seems probable that they are typical for Ting Hsien and the neighboring rural areas. As they are very similar to the division found by Buck[4] in his study of farm families in North China, it seems probable that they also are typical for the rural areas of North China.

The ages of the family heads in the 515 family group ranged from under 15 to over 80. Fifty-four per cent were between 30 and 49, while 32 per cent were between 50 and 69 years of age. Four per cent were over 70 years old. Three family heads were under 15 and 13 were under 20. The six female heads were all between 30 and 54 years of age.

Twenty per cent of the male family heads in the 5,255 families and 14.4 per cent in the 515 families were not married. Even though there were some family heads who were below 15 years of age and in the 515 families 17.5 per cent of the male heads were 60 years of age or older, it would seem that one in five and one in seven were high proportions to be without mates.

595 There were 22 concubines in the 5,255 families and eight in the 515 families.

4. Buck, *op. cit.*

3:Chao E-5 (1939-1941)1948 AF12 North China AF12

but it too feels the pressure of urban ways as the latter has felt and still feels it. Metropolitan ways of living[30] are in the making. The people of P'ing-chiao-tsun will some day feel the need of changing their ways.

Individuation

The relation of the individual to the family and to many other associations constantly occurs in the minds of the village folks. While he is born to a family, an individual gradually realizes that some day he will be free from the control or his parents and elders. With other associations, he feels that his participation may be at least partially voluntary. Whatever the case may be, in the solution of their daily problems, he finds the principle of cooperation most valuable, yet in his participation in group life, he discovers the problem of individuation, or his emancipation from the control of a group or groups. Thus the relation of individual to society presents itself as a problem to the P'ing-chiao-tsun folks as it has been presented to the eminent philosophers in all ages in all human communities. While individuation is always going on with the people in the family and in the village, as a problem it is growing more acute under the pressure of urbanization. In the present section, only a few general observations are made.

No two individuals in P'ing-chiao-tsun are exactly alike. While the sociologists may claim that personality is the subjective aspect of culture,[31] not a single individual has acquired the whole of the culture of P'ing-chiao-tsun.

On the surface of it, all P'ing-chiao-tsun folks look similar. Surely, they are similar in many many ways, but each of them has his own idiosyncrasies. They differ from one another in age, sex, physique, intelligence, temperament, education, family life, associations, and a hundred other ways. All these factors working in combination have undoubtedly given each of them an individuality.

They all may have the same ideals, yet they all differ. In Ping-chiao-tsun, the rule is that the husband should dominate the wife, and yet as in the country at large, there are henpecked husbands. While

30 R. D. McKenzie, The Metropolitan Community, New York, 1933; also The University of Chicago sociological series.

31 Ellsworth Faris, The Nature of Human Nature and Other Essays in Social Psychology, New York, 1937, Part I, Article II, pp. 21-35.

3:Chao E-5 (1939-1941)1948 AF12 North China AF12

593 many daughters-in-law may complain of ill-treatment by their 156 mothers-in-law, others enjoy a happy life because they have good-natured mothers-in-law.

While children are silent in the presence of their parents, they 858 are seldom under close observation. When they are about to be beaten by their angry fathers, there are always the good-natured old women next-door to rescue them. Their cries call out for sympathy and their parents are always happy for them to be so stopped.

156 It is said that a girl should keep her chastity, but there are girls more sexually inclined. They lapse easily in spite of gossip and censure. When they are found out, their poor mothers and friends have to devise ways and means to cover up their acts and to protect them.

While an individual has to spend most of his life-time in his family, he has other associations temporary or permanent, formal or informal. Each individual tries to fit into the society in which he is born. He tries to have associations in accord with his temperament. He may fail but nevertheless he has to try out just the same.

562 Males seem to be more variegated than females. That they are so may be explained by the greater varieties in their associations and freedom in their movements. The chance to individuation lies in more associations. The rule seems to be that, other things being equal, the more memberships one has in groups, the more of an individual he becomes. The development of the self is in direct proportion with the development of human association and society.[32]

The village folks have their family, their friendly associations, their village, their town and, even more, their city. Those who are fortunate and ready to participate in their community and its many associations will in time find their life richer than those who fail to do so.[33]

Summary and Conclusions

121 It is the purpose of the present paper to reveal how the population of a village solves some of its more persistent problems in a cooperative manner. Altogether, major activities in relation to eight

32 Charles H. Cooley, Human Nature and the Social Order, New York, 1922; George H. Mead, Mind, Self and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist, Chicago, 1934.

33 C. H. Cooley, Social Organization, A Study of the Larger Mind, New York, 1925; R. M. MacIver, Community, A Sociological Study, London, 1924.